

Mexico is the largest Spanish-speaking country in the world. Before long, the United States will be the second largest Spanish-speaking country in the world. Almost 15 million United States citizens trace their ancestry to Mexico. Twenty-eight percent of our foreign-born population come from here. Every year our border is legally crossed about 250 million times. With each crossing, we move beyond mere diplomacy, closer to genuine friendship, a human friendship between two peoples who share the same continent, the same air, the same ancestors, the same future.

We are more than neighbors. More and more, we belong to the same American family. Like any family, we will have our differences born of history, experience, instinct, honest opinion. But like any family, we know that what binds us together is far, far more important than what divides us.

Not long after Merida was founded, a Mexican poet described the renewal that comes every year at this time to those who wisely till their fields and plant ahead, in these words: "Here, by the Supreme Giver, one and all, in stintless grace and beauty, are bestowed. This is their dwelling. These, their native fields. And this, the tide of spring in Mexico."

This tide of spring has brought a new season of friendship between Mexico and the United States. President Zedillo, people of Merida and Yucatan, I wish you a happy Carnival. For all of us, I pray that we will reap the full harvest of the season. *Agradezco a los Mexicanos de todo corazón*. Thank you, Mexico.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. in the Teatro Peon Contreras. In his remarks, he referred to President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico and his wife, Nilda; Gov. Victor M. Cervera of Yucatan and his wife, Amira; Mayor Xavier Abreu of Merida; and President Fernando Cardoso of Brazil. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Memorandum on Waiver of Prohibition on Assistance to the Republic of Montenegro *February 16, 1999*

Presidential Determination No. 99-14

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Presidential Certification to Waive Prohibition on Assistance to the Republic of Montenegro

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the laws of the United States, including section 1511 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994 (Public Law 103-160), I hereby certify to the Congress that I have determined that the waiver of the application of the prohibition in section 1511(b) of Public Law 103-160 is necessary to achieve a negotiated settlement of the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina that is acceptable to the parties, to the extent that such provision applies to the furnishing of assistance to the Republic of Montenegro.

Therefore, I hereby waive the application of this provision with respect to such assistance.

You are authorized and directed to transmit a copy of this determination to the Congress and arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

Remarks on Legislative Priorities for the Budget Surplus *February 17, 1999*

She was great—give her a hand. [Applause] Great job. Well, thank you very much, Sharon. You did a great job, and I feel better knowing that you're out at NIH, doing great work there.

I would like to thank Secretary Rubin and Commissioner Apfel and Senator Robb and Representative Baldwin. I'd like to thank Congressmen Levin and Hoyer for being here, and the members of the administration;